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## THE ARABIC PORTION OF THE CAIRO GENIZAH AT CAMBRIDGE.

(*Sixth Article.*)

TAYLOR-SCHECHTER Collection: Paper, two leaves, 12 × 10 cm., upper part much damaged.

The fragment to be discussed in this article forms part of a booklet which contained a work on the calendar, and begins in the middle of a page. Not only is its title quite unknown, but the author, Joseph b. Judah, also is extremely difficult to identify. At first sight one might be tempted to suggest Joseph b. Judah Ibn Aknīn, the famous disciple of Maimonides, and the coincidence of the names is apparently supported by the fact that both came from, or lived in North Africa. Here, however, the similarity ends, and a much larger array of arguments rises up against this theory. Joseph b. Aknīn was a native of Ceuta, and we know from the communications of Arab authors, collected by Munk<sup>1</sup>, that after the expulsion of the Jews from the Maghreb he emigrated to Egypt. The author of our fragment, however, occupied a high ecclesiastical position at Al Mahdiyya, a place situated very close to, or in this instance identical with, Kairowān<sup>2</sup>. There is no intimation to be found anywhere that Joseph b. Aknīn ever resided in this town. It is even improbable that he did so, since all Jews had been expelled from his country.

<sup>1</sup> Notice sur Joseph ben Jehouda, &c., *Journ. As.*, 1842, p. 5 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> See *Jaḡūt* ed. H. F. Wuestenfeld, IV, p. 693 sqq.

Apart from this, the title of our treatise is not to be found in any list of Joseph b. Aknīn's writings<sup>1</sup>.

If our Joseph b. Judah is a different person, it seems that he lived at an earlier period. The employment of the name Al Mahdiyya for Kairowān would point to a period when the power of the Fatimide Califs was still in the ascendancy. Thus our author probably flourished in the eleventh or twelfth century.

There is yet another point which gives probability to this, a point which at the same time raises the interest attaching to the fragment. It contains a quotation from the commentary on the Pentateuch by Aaron b. Sargadū<sup>2</sup>, the rival of Saadyāh. Although the existence of this work has been known, every trace of it had been lost. The fact that we see it quoted shows that it must have been considered valuable in its time. At the period of Joseph b. Aknīn it was probably forgotten. Joseph b. Judah's treatise deals with the Jewish calendar, and even in these scant relics the author shows himself well acquainted with the current standard of Arab astronomy.

## XIX.

T-S. 8 Fa. 1<sup>4</sup>.

הָא כְּתָאב אֲלִבְיָאן לְחִסָּאב אֲלַעֲיבּוּר מִמָּא אֲלָפָה ר' יוֹסֵף בֶּר יִהוּדָה זֶל	Fol. 1
רָאשׁ הַסֵּדֶר אֲלִמְהַדְרֵי אִפְתַּחָה מִוֹלָפָה וְקָאֵל תְּבַאֲרֵךְ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	verso,
אֲלֹאֲחֵד אֲלַעֲמִד אֲלִמְנַפְרֵד בְּאַלְחֻדְרָאנִיָּה אֲלֹאֲזֵל אֲלִמְלֵךְ אֲלִחֶק אֲלֹאֲלָה אֲלֵי	l. 6 from
כֹּלֶךְ אֲלִסְמָאֻאֵת וְאַלְאֲרִין וְמָא פִּיהֶם פִּי ו' אִיאֵם וְאַכְתֵּרַע אֲלִכֶּלֶךְ בְּגֻדָּה	bottom.
וְאַנְשָׁא . . . . . שְׁאֵנָה בָּה . . . . . בֵּל חֲסִנָּה . . . חוּאִיִּן כֹּלֶקָה אֲלִיהָ	Fol. 2
. . . . . יוֹם אֲלֹאֲוֹל אֲל[נ]ר וְלֵם יוֹגְדָה גִּלְאֵל[?] א . . . . . אֲד אֲלִנּוֹר מַעָּה	recto.
סָאכֵן וְעָאֵלֵם מָא פִּי . . . . . אֲלִסְרָאִיר בְּמָאנַע תּוֹלִיָּה הוּא גִּלָּא . . . . . וְלִים	
בִּין יִדִּיָּה טָאֵלֵם (sic) כְּקוֹלָה גַּם חֶשֶׁךְ לֹא יַחֲשִׁיךְ מִמֶּךְ וְאַנְמָא אֲוִגְדָּהָ	

<sup>1</sup> See Steinschneider, *Arab. Lit. d. Juden*, p. 230 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> As to the different ways of spelling this name, see Neubauer, *Med. Chr.*, II, pp. 80-3, or Steinsch., l. c., p. 71.

תעאלי לנפע זלקה כק' וירא אלהים את האור כי טוב יריד ללמזלוקין  
חסב מא קאל אלחכים ומתוק האור וטוב לעינים תם זלק פי אליום אלב  
אלרקיע לנפע זלקה איצא אז לא יחוי רבנא תקדסט אסמאיה (sic)  
אלסמואת ואלארצין (sic) כמא קאל אלולי הנה השמים ושמי השמים לא  
יכלכלוך והו אנ קסם אנ כאן נאמרא לגמיע ונה אלארין בנצחין כק' ויהי  
מבדיל בין מים למים וקאלו אלאולין עאס הנליד את הטפה האמצעית  
ועשה ממנה את הרקיע פכאן פי דלך נפעין אחרהמא אנה חעאלי געל פי  
אלרקיע תאחיר אלמטר אלדי בה חיאית אלעאלם לאן תהינ מנה חרכאת  
תתור בה בזאראת אלארין פירחפע אלי אלעלו וירנע מנעכסא עלי אלארין  
ואלנפע אלב בין נצח אלמא פוקה ליטפי בה נאריה אלכואכב לילא תודי  
אלזלק כק' והמים אשר מעל לרקיע (תם פעלה פי אלתאני) ותם פעלה פי  
אליום אלז פאנתמע אלאמא למוצע ואחר וטחר אליבים לנפע אלזלק  
כקולה השמים שמים ליו' והארין נתן לבני אדם ללסכני וללעמארה תם  
זלק פיהלסאיר אלנבאת ואלדראע ואלתמאר ללמזלוקין איצא כק'  
מצימח חציר לבחמה ועשב וסאיר אלפצל ואנמא . . . לקון[לה] . . על  
הארין וקאל איצא . . . תם זלק [פי אליום] אלד אלנואר . . . אלשני  
המאורות וז והי אלשמם ואלקמר . . . לנפע אלמזלוקין ולצהה אבדאנהם  
וכמאלאתהם וטעם תמארהם אד לא תתם אלא בולך כק' אלכתאב וממנד  
תבואות שמש וז עבארה דלך ומן לזאיז אלגלאת אלשמסיה ומן מלאך  
חבוב אלקמריה וקד שרחה ראס אלמתיבה מר' ור' אהרן הכהן בר  
שרנאדו פי תפסירה לוואת הברכה מן אלתמם אלכתאב וקף עליה ולחסב  
אלאיאם ואלשהור ואלסנין וכק' והיו לאותות ולמועדים ולימים ושנים  
ועבארה דלך לתכון איאתא ואוקאתא ויחצא בהם אלאיאם ואלסנין וזכ אלולי  
איצא עשה ירח למועדים וז ולעלם אוקאת אלסנה ותחוויל אלשהור ומטלע  
אלכואכב וגרובהא ועלאמאת אוקאתהא אלליל ואלנהאר באלזח מנולה והי  
אלנמח ואלבטיין וסאיר אלזח ועלאמאת דלאיל טרק אלמסאפריין מחל  
אלסמיה ובנאת נעש אלתי הי פי אלקטב אלשמאל ובהא יסתדלון רכאב  
אלבחאר יעלם כסוף אלשמם ואלקמר ומא יוכסף באלראס או באלדנבה אנ  
כאן כסוף כלי או בעין אלנירין ותעלק אלאפלאך בעצהא בבעין ואן ללכואכב  
אלד אעניי זחל ואלמריך ואלזהרה ועטארד פלו אנ סוי אלנירין אלשמם  
ואלקמר פאן ליס להא סוי פלך פלך ולדלך צארת אלה כואכב פי פלך  
נפסה פאדא כאן פוק פלכה . . .

Fol. 2  
verso.

Prob. שני.

? סר גר

## TRANSLATION.

This is a lucid treatise on the calculation of the calendar composed by R. Josef b. Judāh, the chief of the Academy of Al Mahdiyya. The author says in preface: Praised be God, the God of Israel, The Only, The Eternal, whose unity is unparalleled, The Everlasting, the true King who created heaven and earth, and what is therein in six days. In his goodness he created man, and made him great . . . . . his nobility . . . . . The needs of his creatures . . . . . on the first day the light, but he did not create it coarse . . . . since the light dwelleth with him<sup>1</sup>; he knows what is in . . the secrets . . . . . He revealeth the deep and secret things<sup>2</sup> . . . . . There is no darkness before him, as it is written: The darkness hideth not from thee<sup>3</sup>; but God created it for the benefit of his creatures, as it is written: "And God saw the light that it was good"—viz. for creatures. In a similar strain the sage [king] says: The light is sweet and a pleasant thing for the eyes<sup>4</sup>. On the second day he created the firmament likewise for the benefit of his creatures, since heaven and earth are not able to grasp our Lord, hallowed be his names, as it is written: Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee<sup>5</sup>. . . . covered the whole surface of the earth with two reservoirs, as he says: And let it divide the waters from the waters. Our sages explain this: He crystallized the central drop and made the firmament of it<sup>6</sup>. Two advantages accrued from this. Firstly he placed in the firmament the source of the rain upon which the life of the world depends, because it causes movements, through which the vapours of the earth are stirred, raised up to the height, and sent down again to the earth. The second advantage is manifest. He arranged the reservoir of the water above in order that the stars should become apparent, lest the creatures be injured, as it is written: "And the waters which were above the firmament." This was what he did on the second day. On the third day he gathered the waters into one place, and the dry land appeared for the benefit of the creatures, as it is written<sup>7</sup>: "The heavens are heavens unto the Lord, but the earth he hath given to the children of men," to inhabit it and to live thereon. Then he planted on it all plants, seeds, and trees again for the creatures, as it is written<sup>8</sup>: He causes grass to grow for the cattle, and herb, &c. and other advantages . . . . . as

<sup>1</sup> Deut. ii. 22.<sup>2</sup> Dan. ii. 22.<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxxxix. 12.<sup>4</sup> Eccl. xi. 7.<sup>5</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27.<sup>6</sup> Ber. Rabb. iv.<sup>7</sup> Ps. cxv. 16.<sup>8</sup> Ps. civ. 14.

he says<sup>1</sup> . . . "upon the earth." Then, on the fourth day, he created the lights . . . . . which are "the lights," &c. These are the sun and the moon . . . . . for the benefit of the creatures, for the health of and perfection of their bodies, and the eating of their fruits, because the latter can only become perfect through the sun, as it is written<sup>2</sup>: And for the precious fruit brought forth by the sun. The explanation is, that the most enjoyable corn is that shone upon by the sun and the pleasantest of grains is that influenced by the moon. The following is the explanation given by the Exilarch, *A. H. bar Sargādū*, in his Commentary on Deut. xxxiii: "He who consults the Holy Writ, abides by it, also for the calculation of the days, months, and years, as it is written: And they shall be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years."—The explanation of this is that they are signs and seasons, by means of which the days and years are calculated as the godly [king] said<sup>3</sup>: "He appointed the moon for seasons," &c., for the knowledge of the seasons of the year and the change of the months the rising and setting of the stars, as indications of their times by night and by day in the twenty-eight stations [of the moon] which are the horn of the Ram, Al Botein<sup>4</sup>, &c. Further as guides for travellers as the Polar star<sup>5</sup> or the Banāt Na'sh<sup>6</sup>, which are in the northern hemisphere, and serve sailors as guides. Through these signs the eclipses of the sun and moon are recognized, and whether the eclipse is an upper or a lower one, a partial or a total one. Further the conjunctions of planets. If the four planets Saturnus, Mars, Venus, and Mercury . . . . .

<sup>1</sup> Ps. civ. 19.<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 14.<sup>3</sup> Ps. cxv. 19.<sup>4</sup> A small star in the constellation of Aries.<sup>5</sup> The word is evidently corrupt, and is perhaps to be read *לִבְנֵי שֶׁמַיִם*, the "polar star."<sup>6</sup> A star in Ursa major.

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